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Vowel Shifting in German and English

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VOWEL SHIFTING

IN

GERMAN AND ENGLISH

BY

MILDRED LEANN COBURN

THESIS

FOR THE

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

IN

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DEGREE OF Bachelor of Arts with Honors in German

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Table of Contents.

I. Development of the Indo-Germanic vowels with special attention to the Germanic division. pp. 1-12.

Summary of correspondences. p. 12.

II. Development of Modern German vowels from Old High German. pp. 13-23.

Summary of correspondences. p. 24.

III. Development of Modern English vowels from Anglo-Saxon. pp. 24-35

Summary of correspondences. pp. 30, 32.

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Vowel-Shifting in German and English.

I. Development of the Indo-Germanic vowels with special attention to the Germanic division.

"One of the most thoroughly investigated groups of languages is what we know as the Indo-Germanic, the Indo-European, or, as it is sometimes called, the Aryan family of languages." The term "Aryan" has been quite generally discarded as it is also used for one of the subdivisions. "Indo-European" is a misnomer since two members of this language family, Indo-Iranian and Old Armenian, are not European but Asiatic, while on the other hand, not all European languages belong to this family, for example, Basque. Accordingly "Indo-Germanic" has been largely accepted inasmuch as it is a descriptive name and shows the range of the family. It consists of eight members, one of which is the Germanic, that is, this scheme of eight groups has been made and the possible, original forms have been reconstructed from scientific investigations by philologists. These forms are

Dickhoff, J. The German Language. p. 31.

purely theoretical inasmuch as no monuments of the original language are preserved. For convenience the Germanic group is divided into East, North, and West Germanic. The latter has the following subdivisions: Old Saxon or Old Low German, Dutch, Flemish, spoken in parts of Belgium, Frisian, now spoken on a few small islands of the North Sea only, and English. These constitute the Low German group. What we ordinarily call German is High German. From the fact that English is a part of the Germanic group, it is sometimes erroneously stated that English springs from German or that Gothic is the antecedent of both, since very frequent reference is made to its forms. It is merely the oldest representative of a group sprung from a common source. It constituted the East Germanic group and died, leaving no descendants. Its forms, preserved in its oldest monument, a portion of the Bible of the fourth century, naturally form a good basis of comparison for English, since our German ancestors, the Saxons, did not migrate to England until 449. This was but a part of the general process of scattering that took place through the

centuries and led to the differentiation of tongues, at least it is supposed that the Indo-Germanic family once lived in a common region, though this has not been definitely located. Some scholars today believe it was located in southern Russia.

If certain words in German and English are given to a person unfamiliar with both, he will recognize a similarity, for instance,- Vater - father, Mutter - mother, Brot - bread, Fisch - fish, Fleisch - flesh, Buch - book, Silber - silver. On the other hand he will be unable to recognize the majority. In the fifteen hundred years that have passed since the separation of the Saxons from their continental relatives many changes have occurred to differentiate German and English from each other as well as from their common source. These changes have taken place in every phase of the languages, but the description of them all would necessarily consume too much space; hence this article will be limited to the vowel changes. "Scientific etymology requires that great attention shall be paid to the consonants, but still greater to the

Skeat, W. W. Principles of English Etymology. Vol. I. p. 72.

vowels. For after all, it is precisely the vowel-sound which gives life and soul to the word. The combination "rn" signifies nothing; but, if between these two letters, we insert vowels at pleasure, we obtain quite different results ---- run, ran, rain, rein, roan, or rune."

Changes in spelling, for example, doubling the vowel in German "Saat", "Aal," which are equivalent respectively to English "seed" and "eel," to show lengthening, have no historical value. Although Gothic is the oldest representative of the Germanic group, it does not necessarily agree in the changes or losses in English or German. These changes have occurred in pronunciation as well as spelling,- German dumm- English dumb, German fahren- English fare. In some instances they are closer to each other than to Gothic. An illustration is the fact that West Germanic keeps Indo-Germanic ĕ while it has been changed in Gothic to ĭ. German has kept more faithfully than English the sounds of the Latin letters which both borrowed. English vowels have quite different values,- ā is equivalent to German ē; ē to German

ī, and so on. The farther back into English one goes, the more similar are the sounds to German. Even so late as Chaucer's time pronunciation retained a strong Germanic coloring as evidenced from the rhymes in poetry. This is conclusive that English vowel quality has changed in five hundred years or less, and after spelling was fixed.

Since no monuments of the Indo-Germanic language exist, forms have been constructed from comparison of various languages, with what seems to be a fair degree of accuracy. If the same phenomenon occurs in several languages it hardly seems an accident. According to investigations, the original vowel system consisted of five long vowels,- ā, ē, ī, ō, ū, five short vowels,- a, e, i, o, u, an indeterminate one whose value is not exactly known and which has been designated by the "schwa," ə, six long diphthongs,- āi, ēi, ōi, āu, ēu, ōu, and six short diphthongs,- ai, ei, oi, au, eu, ou. Forms marked with an asterisk * are theoretical forms. For ease in comparing forms the following abbreviations will be used: Idg. for Indo-Germanic; Preg., Pregermanic, the source of the Germanic lan-

guages, but a language existing only in theory; Goth., Gothic; Ohg., Old High German; Mhg., Middle High German; Nhg., New or Modern High German; AS., Anglo-Saxon; Mid.E., Middle English; E., Modern English. The word or sound before the opening of the symbol > develops into the one following it.

ĭ.

There has been less change in Idg. ĭ than any other vowel. The Idg. root *bhĭd, to split, has been set up. This would give something like *bit-umé in Preg., resulting in Goth. bit-um, Ohg. bizzum, Nhg. bissen, AS. bit-on, E. bit. Another example is vidhávā in Sanskrit, the oldest language of the family. In Goth. this appears as widuwō, Ohg. wituwa, Nhg. Witwe, AS. wideue, E. widow. Preg. ĭ before r or h becomes e, written in Goth. ai, - Idg. *wir-o-s, Latin vir, Preg. *wir-a-z, wĕr-a-z, Goth. vair-s, AS. and Ohg. wer, seen in English and German Werwolf.

ī.

The Idg. ī is preserved in all the Germanic division but it is spelled ei in Gothic. The best example to be found in several forms is the suffix, īnus, mean-

ing like, - Latin suīnus, like swine; 2dg. *su-īno-s, *sv-īno-s, Preg. *swina-z, Goth. swein, Ohg. swīn, Nhg. Schwein, AS. swīn, E. swine. It is to be noted that the original adjective came to be used as a substantive.

ŭ.

The 2dg. ŭ is also preserved in the Germanic division, - Preg. *hund-a-z, Goth. hund-s, AS. hund, Ohg. hunt; 2dg. *yuvn̥-kó-s, Preg. *yuvunzás contracted to *yunz ás, Goth. jiggs (gg is merely the Gothic writing of ng as in finger. This happens also in Greek.), Ohg. and Nhg. jung, AS. geong, E. young. In young the ŭ-sound is kept but the spelling does not correspond to it; Old Indian bubudhima, Goth. ána-budum, Ohg. butum, AS. budon. Unless there was a nasal plus a consonant following the u to prevent an a in the next syllable breaking the u to o, that change occurred, for example, Sanskrit yugam, Latin jugum, Preg. *yukam, Goth. juk, Ohg. joh, Nhg. Joch, AS. geoc, E. yoke.

ū.

The 2dg. ū was preserved in Preg. but has been diphthongized in some modern forms, - AS. mūs, E. mouse, Ohg. mūs, Nhg.

Mouse; AS. hūs, E. house, Ohg. hūs, Nhg. Haus; Preg. * fū-lá-s, Goth. fūl-s, AS. fūl, E. foul, Ohg. fūl, Nhg. faul.

ĕ.

All the European languages have kept Idg. ĕ while the Asiatic have changed it to a; - Idg. * bhérō, Latin ferō, Preg. * bérō, Goth. bair-an (Goth. changes e to i in most cases; here it has retained the e before r (or h), but spells it, ai), Ohg. beran, Mhg. bern, Nhg. (ge)-bären, AS. beran, E. bear; Idg. * éd-ō, Ieat; Latin ĕdō, Preg. * étō, Goth. it-an (infinitive), Ohg. ezzan, Nhg. essen, AS. etan, E. eat.

ē.

Idg. ē became very open ē in Preg., very close ē in Goth. and AS., and more open sound of ā in Ohg.; - Idg. root * dhē, to put, to do, Latin fēcī, Goth. ga-dē-ps, Ohg. tāt, Nhg. Tat, AS. dād, E. deed; Goth. frētum, Nhg. frässen, E. fret; Goth. ga-rēdan, Ohg. rātan, Nhg. raten, AS. rædan, E. read; Idg. * nē-tlo, Goth. nēp-la, Ohg. nādala, Nhg. Nadel, E. needle.

ŏ.

Idg. ŏ is equivalent to Preg. a; - Idg. * ghortó-s, Gk. χόρτος, Latin hortus, Preg. * gardá-s, Goth. gard-s, enclosure, Nhg. Gart-en, E. garden, yard; Idg. * oktōv, eight, Latin octō, Goth. ahtáu,

Ohg. ahto, Nhg. acht, AS. eahta (before l, r or h plus a consonant, a underwent "breaking" to ea), E. eight; Goth. ha, Ohg. (h)waz, AS. hwā, hwæt, E. who, what; Goth. þat-a, Ohg. daz, AS. ðæt.

ō.

Idg. ō is preserved in Preg. as ō, - Idg. root *plō, fluid, Greek πλυ-τό-ς, Preg. *flō-ðú-s, flood, Ohg. flōt, fluot, Nhg. Flut, AS. flōd, E. flood; Idg. *pôd-s, foot, Preg. *fōt-s, Goth. fōt-u-s, Ohg. fuoz, Nhg. Fuß, AS. fōt, E. foot; Idg. root *bhlō, to bloom, Preg. *blō-man (infinitive), Goth. blōma, flower, Ohg. bluoma, Nhg. Blume, AS. blōma, E. bloom.

ă.

This vowel remains unchanged in Preg. Idg. *sáld, salt, Preg. *săłt whence comes Goth. salt, Nhg. Salz, E. salt; Idg. *agró-s, field, Latin ager, Preg. *akrá-s, Goth. akr-s, Ohg. accher, Nhg. Acker, AS. æcer, E. acre.

ā.

Idg. ā became ō in Preg.; - Idg. *maté, mother, Latin māter, Ohg. muotar, Nhg. Mutter, AS. mōdor, E. mother; so with Goth. brōþar, Ohg. bruoder, Nhg. Bruder, AS. brōðor, E. brother; Idg. *bhāgó-s, a certain tree, Latin fāgus, beech, Preg. *bōká-s, beech, Goth. bōk-s, AS. bōc-

trēow (which should have become E.* book-tree and E. book, but became beech instead, by umlaut as bōc and bēc, fōt and fēt), Ohg. buoha, Nhg. Buche, beech and Buch, book (Buch-stabe, Nhg. for a letter of the alphabet, means literally a beech staff, this instrument having been used in tracing letters.

ə.

The character of this vowel is not definitely known; Greek πατήρ, Latin pater, Goth. fadar, Ohg. fater, AS. fæder, Sanskrit pitā. The Sanskrit form leads to the supposition of different values of the vowel. Goth. fagrs, fitting, suitable, AS. fæger, schön, Ohg. fah shows the same vowel.

Three of each set of diphthongs in Idg. were based on i, — ei, oi, ai, and three on u, — eu, ou, au. These were quite accurately preserved in the classical languages but in the Germanic groups old diphthongs are difficult to recognize and can be traced only by comparison with other languages which have preserved them.

ei.

As Idg. ē changed to ī in Goth., so the primitive diphthong ei changed first to ii and was then contracted to ī; Goth.

steigan, (the ei is purely orthographic and not related to the source), AS. and Ohg. stīgan, preserved in Nhg. steigen (ei again orthographic) but lost in E." Ulfilas borrowed this symbol from Byzantine Greek, where the old diphthong ει had contracted to ī." Ulfilas was the bishop who translated the Bible into Gothic for use in his diocese.

oi.

Since Idg. ŏ and ă fall together in Germanic as ă, it is regular for the diphthongs oi and ai to coincide as ai. In AS. this becomes ā and in E., ō; in Ohg. it is spelled ei but changed in sound to ay in Mhg.- Preg. *wait-e, Goth. wait, Ohg. weiz, AS. wāt, Nhg. weiß, Mid. E. wot, but lost in E.; Goth. ains, Ohg. ein, Nhg. ein, AS. ān, E. one.

ai.

This is clearly seen in the Gothic; Goth. aip.s, altar, Ohg. eit, Nhg. Eid, AS. ād, a funeral pile, E. oath. As early as Ohg., ai contracted to ē if followed by r, h, or w,- Goth. saivala, soul, Ohg. sēh(w)la, Nhg. Seele, AS. sāwul, E. so(u)l.

ew.

Henry, V. A Short Comparative Grammar of English and German. p. 53, note 3.

As e becomes i, so does eu become iu; as u changes to o if followed by j, so eu becomes eo, which in turn becomes io in Ohg; Goth. anabiudan, to offer, AS. bēodan, Ohg. biutan, biotan; Preg. *keusanam, Goth. kiusan, AS. cēosan, Ohg. chiosan. The Ohg. forms fleugot and kreugot, which appear in William Tell for fliegot and kriegot, show the origin of the latter vowels.

ou.

Like oi and ai, ou and au coincide as au in Preg.; Goth. tiuhan, Ohg. ziohan, AS. tēon; Goth. ana-baup, Ohg. bōt, AS. bēad (with vowel variation); Preg. *raud-á-s, Goth. ráup-s, Ohg. rōt, Nhg. rot, AS. rēad, E. red.

au.

This diphthong appears in Goth. aukan, to increase, Ohg. auhhōn, AS. ēacian, from which the adverb comes, -Preg. *auk, Goth. áuk, AS. ēac, E. eke), Ohg. auh, Nhg. auch; Idg. *kău̯p-et, head, Preg. *haub-ip, Goth. háubip, Ohg. houbit, Nhg. Haupt, AS. hēafod, E. head.

Long diphthongs are kept only in the Indo-Iranian family. Elsewhere they coincide with the short.

Summary of corresponding vowels.

Idg.	i	u	e	ə, a, o	ī, ei	ū	ou, au	eu	ē	ā, ō	ai, oi
G, Goth.	i, e before i and h	u, o before r and h	i, e before r and h	a	ī	ū	au	iu	ē	ō	ai

II. Development of Modern German vowels from Old High German.

The variation of German and English from each other as well as from the parent language has been shown. The farther down into modern times their development is traced the more divergent they become.

"The OHG. monuments were written in the Latin alphabet. Vowel length was either entirely omitted in writing, or was represented by doubling the respective vowel; but sometimes also by using the accents (^, ´)." The "OHG" means Old High German, designated in this paper by "Ohg." The Ohg. vowel-system was made up of a, ë, i, o, u, ā, ē, ī, ō, ū, the digraphs ei, ie (ea, ia), io (eo), iu, ow (aw), and uo (ua). All the vowels except short e were pronounced like the A.S. It had two functions, - as a representative of Teg. e (written ë in this use) it had the sound of E. ë and when it represented the sound caused by i-umlaut (written e) it had the sound of é in French été. The accentuation was largely stress in the Germanic languages as proved by the weakening and loss of vowels and syllables which were unstressed.

a.

Wright, Joseph. Historical German Grammar. Vol. I. p. 10.

Preg. a remained unchanged in Ohg.; Goth. akeri, Ohg. ackar; Goth. ahtáu, Ohg. ahto; Goth. and Ohg. faran; Goth. gasts, Ohg. Gast.

ë (umlaut).

In Ohg. a̲ became e̲ when originally followed by i or j in the following syllable; gesti plural of gast, brennan, to burn, beside Goth. brannjan; lengī, length, lang, long; Ohg. seggan, Goth. satjan. This i-umlaut did not take place before ht or hs for some time; maht, plural mahti; wahsit, he grows, infinitive wahsan. Traces of the i-umlaut as early as the eighth century are found. Umlaut e was probably the same as ë in sound until the ninth century when they were differentiated. They are still kept apart in many dialects.

ë.

Preg. e remained, for the most part unchanged; Ohg. hëlfan, stëlan; it became i̲ when followed by u̲ or i̲ in the next syllable, - hilfu, I help, helfis; hilfst, helfist; nimu, I take, nëman, infinitive; gibu, I give, infinitive gëban; j had a similar influence, - Latin medius, Goth. midjis, Ohg. mitti, Nhg. Mitte; the adjective irdīn, earthy, from the noun erda, earth shows the i influence; ë became o̲ through the influence of a preceding w̲ as

Nhg. Woche beside wecha; wola, adverb well, wēla; worolt, world, wēralt; Preg. i followed by ā, ă, ō, ŏ or ē in the next syllable became e when not protected by a nasal plus a consonant or i or j; Idg. *wiros, Latin vir, Ohg. wer.

i.

Ohg. retains Preg. i; Goth. fiskes, fish, Ohg. fisk; Goth. widuwo, widow, Ohg. wituwa; Goth. witan, to know, Ohg. wizzan.

o.

Ohg. o is Preg. o which came from an earlier u; similar to the change of i to e, u followed originally by ā, ă, ō, ŏ or ē in the next syllable became o when not protected by a nasal plus a consonant or i or j; Idg. *ugom, Latin iugum, Ohg. joh; Preg. *ghutóm, God, Ohg. got; Ohg. past participle gibotan, offered, beside gibuntan, bound; Ohg. golt, gold from *gulþóm. Only the West Germanic shows the umlaut.

u.

Preg. u remained; Goth. sunus, son, Ohg. sunu; infinitive wurken from *wurkjan, to work, beside the preterite worhta; gibuntan given above; Old Saxon preterite plural budum, we offered, Ohg. butum.

ā.

In Preg., a + ŋx became āx, - Goth. and Ohg. fāhan from Preg.* faŋxanan, to seize; Goth. and Ohg. hāhan, to hang, beside Ohg. gihangan.

ā.

This vowel is the representative of Germanic ā, in contrast to the preceding, which came from ă in a combination; Ohg. tāt, Goth. gadēþs, deed; Ohg. rātan, AS. rǣdan, to advise; Ohg. bārum, Goth. bērum, AS. bǣron, we bore.

ē > ia, ie.

The oldest period of Ohg. retained Preg. ē; ea appeared beside it in the eighth century and then changed to ia and ie. Accordingly ie is the normal form from the ninth century; Ohg. hiar, Goth. hēr; Ohg. miata, AS. mēd; the singular preterite of reduplicating verbs that have a, ā, ei in the present, - Ohg. hialt, he held, infinitive haltan; hiaz, Old Saxon hēt, infinitive hēizan, to call.

ī.

This Ohg. vowel remained from the Preg.; Ohg. bīzan, AS. bītan, to bite; Ohg. and AS. swīn, Goth. swein, pig.

uo.

Ohg. uo gradually displaced Preg. ō, the process being finished in the ninth cen-

tury,- Ohg. fuoz, Goth. fōtus, foot; Ohg. fluot, Goth. flōdus, flood.

ū.

This ū is Preg.,- Ohg. and AS. hūs, Goth. hūs in gudhūs, temple; Ohg. dūsunt, Goth. þūsundi; Ohg. dūhta, Goth. þūhta, it seemed.

ē.

This developed from Germanic ai before r, old h, w, and when final; Ohg. mēro, Goth. maiza, greater; Ohg. sēla, Goth. sáiwala; Ohg. wē, Goth. wái, woe! Goth. air, sooner, Ohg. ēr.

ei.

In other positions ai became Ohg. ei,- Ohg. heil, Goth. háils, hale; Ohg. stein, Goth. stáins, stone; Ohg. heiz an., Goth. haitan, to call.

ō.

Close ō developed from Preg. au before d, t, z, s, n, r, l, and old h (from spirant x); Ohg. tōd, Goth. dáupus, death; Ohg. rōt, Goth. ráups, red; Ohg. preterite singular kōs, Goth. káus, he chose.

ou.

In all other places au developed into ou; Ohg. houbit, Goth. háubiþ, head; Ohg. preterite singular bōg, Goth. báug, he bent; Ohg. ouga, Goth. áugō, eye.

iu.

This digraph in Ohg. came from Preg. ew if it was followed in the next syllable by i, j, or u, - Ohg. niuwi from Preg. *neujo, new; Ohg. liuhten, Goth. liuhtjan, Preg. *leuhtjan, to light; biutu, I offer.

eo.

In other cases ew became eo, then io, and finally ie in the tenth century; Ohg. lioht, Goth. liuhaþ, a light; Ohg. kiosan, Goth. kiusan, to test, Mhg. kiesen.

The umlaut of a to e is the only case that occurs in Ohg. The Mhg. vowels a, o, u, ā, ō, ū, ou, uo underwent umlaut before 1200. The umlaut from a to e has been illustrated; a to ä occurred in positions previously protected from umlaut, - Mhg. maht, plural mähte (Ohg. mahti); o to ö, - dorf, plural dörfer; loch, löcher; u to ü, - Ohg. dunni, Mhg. dünne; Ohg. turi, Mhg. tür; ā to æ, - preterite subjunctive næme, Ohg. nāmi; ō to œ, - hœher, Ohg. hōhir; schœne, Ohg. scōni, beautiful; ū to iu, - biute, Ohg. brūti, brides; hiuser, Ohg. hūsir, houses; ou to öu, - löuber, Ohg. loubir, leaves; uo to üe, - grüene, Ohg. gruoni; vüeze, Ohg. fuoz, i. Aside from the changes caused by umlaut, Mhg. vowels were practically the same

as Ohg. except for minor changes in spelling, as ackar > acker, tag > tac, gesti > geste, lengi > lenge, wëg > wëc, helfan > hëlfen, fisk > visch, nimu > nime, giboran > geboren, wola > wol, sumi > sum, butum > buten. Before nasals u became o, and iu became ö as, soone from sunne, gönnen from günnen. Of the diphthongs, ie remained for a time, then contracted to ī and finally to ĭ before two consonants, - gieng > gīng > ging. In Mhg., uo contracted to ū in the thirteenth century.

"The MHG. short vowels in closed syllables have generally remained in NHG., whereas the MHG. short vowels in open syllables have mostly been lengthened." When a Mhg. vowel appeared both in an open and in a closed syllable, as wëc - wege, the Nhg. has adopted the form in the open syllable, Weg - Wege. Umlaut came to be expressed by two dots (¨) over the vowel instead of using a different vowel with a similar sound, for instance, - gast - Gäste, Mhg. gast - geste; Lamm - Lämmer, lamp - lember. In some cases ä is used for Mhg. ë, - gebären, Mhg. gebërn." The historical distinction between MHG. ä, e, and ë no longer exists in the North German pronunciation of the stan-

dard language." "Rounded ö, ü, and äu (eu) were not distinguished in pronunciation from unrounded e, i, ei until far into the eighteenth century; hence ö and e, ü and i, äu (eu) and ei often rhyme with each other in the poetry of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries." E in the neighborhood of labials, l, or sch became rounded as early as the fourteenth century and was replaced by ö in many words,- erlöschen, Mhg. erleschen; Wölben, Mhg. welben. The symbol ü has replaced older i in a few words,- fünf, Ohg. finf; Würde, Mhg. wirde. The change of u to o before nasals began in the twelfth century. In Nhg. it has continued to change before nn, mm, and sometimes before n plus a consonant,- begonnen, Mhg. begunnen; geklommen, Mhg. geklummen. Mhg. a, ë, i, o, u, ö, ü have remained unchanged as in Acker, Feld, Fisch, Dorf, Burg, Dörfer, Brücke. Mhg. æ, the umlaut of ā, has become close ē whether written e or ä but the latter form predominates,- Gräfin, krähen, träge. The other Mhg. long vowels, ā, ē, ī, ō, œ, have remained unchanged as in Gaben, Mhg. gāben, Ehre, Brot, bösel (ö is the Nhg. writing for œ). Mhg. ī became ai in sound in Nhg., but it

Wright, Joseph Historical German Grammar. Vol. I. pp. 47-49.

ei always written ei,- dein, Mhg. dīn; drei, Mhg. drī; greifen, Mhg. grīfen; Meile, Mhg. mīle; Weib, Mhg. wīp. Mhg. ū has become au in Nhg.- auf, Mhg. ūf; aus, ūz; Haus, hūs; Maus, mūs; Baum, bōm. Mhg. iu has become oi (written äu and eu) in Nhg. It had the double significance of Ohg. iu and Ohg. ū which had fallen together and had become written ū. The Mhg. iu that corresponded to Ohg. iu is written eu,- deutsch, tiutsch; heute, hiute; Leute, liute; äu is used as the umlaut form,- räumen, Mhg. rūmen; säumen, sūmen. An e has developed before r in closed syllables after Nhg. ei, eu, au from Mhg. ī, iu, ū,- Feier, Mhg. vīre; Abenteuer, āventiure; Mauer, mūre

Of the Mhg. diphthongs, ei, ou, öu have remained in Nhg; ei has become ai (still usually written ei),- breit, heiß, Kleid, written ai in Mai, Kaiser, Waise; ou has become au; auch, Mhg. ouch; Laub, loub; öu has become oi in sound (written äu and eu) and has fallen together with Nhg. äu (eu),- Bäume, stäuben, leugnen, beugen. The Mhg. diphthongs ie, uo, üe became contracted to ī (written ie), ū, and ü in Nhg. as in lieb, tief, hieb, Buch, Blume, Mut, blühen, Bücher, prüfen. The

tendency toward diphthongal pronunciation in these cases is seen in some dialects today.

A very important factor that enters especially into the vowels of the strong verb system is ablaut or gradation of vowels. Ohg. verbs had four principal parts, - infinitive, preterite singular, preterite plural, and perfect participle. Five of the six classes of strong verbs contained e (or i) in the infinitive and a in the preterite. This is called qualitative ablaut or "Vollstufe." Conditions for it are not thoroughly understood. It may have been produced to avoid monotony of sound, - Goth. stilan, Ohg. stelan - preterite of Goth. and Ohg. stal; stigan in Goth. was formerly staigan, preterite staig. This ablaut appeared before historical Goth.; it also occurred where e was a member of a diphthong, - ei changed to ai; Goth. greipan, to siege, preterite graip; eu (Goth. in ax i represents Idg. e) changed to au; Goth. biudan, to offer, preterite baup. The Idg. shows a fondness for this varying or coloring of vowels. In all of the above cases a is the Germanic representation of Idg. o, the gradation of e to o and ē to ō being a regu-

lar ablaut series. Although this ablaut occurs most frequently in verbs, it is not restricted to them, - Goth. dēdē, Ohg. tāt (Idg. ē), Ohg. tuon (Idg. ō). It is seen today in singen, sang; binden, band. In the Goth. participle the last syllable received the accent and all that preceded it was slighted. The same was true in Ohg. The preterite plural of drinkan was drunkumá and the participle, drunkaná in which the consonant partook of a vowel nature. From this so-called "Schwundstufe" developed an obscure vowel u as the accent shifted toward the first of the word. This quantitative ablaut is seen in Nhg. getrunken, gebunden.

External changes give rise to words imitative of others known to the speaker. These, though arising from carelessness, may survive; Nhg. Friedhof has to do with Ohg. vriten, hedge but from confusion in pronunciation it has come to be connected with Friede; Eichhorn, borrowed from AS. ācvern, became as early as Ohg., eihhorn, but it has nothing to do with Eiche nor Horn. This is termed "popular etymology" or "Volksetymologie". It works in modern as well as prehistoric times.

Summary of corresponding vowels.

Short vowels.

Mhg.	ā, a	e, ä, æ	ë, e, ē	i, ï, ie	o, u, ō	u, ü, uo	ö, e, ü	ü, i, üe
Nhg.	a	ä	e	i	o	u	ö	ü

Long vowels and diphthongs.

Mhg.	ā, a	æ, ë, e	ē, æ, e ë	ie, i in some places	ō, ā, o	uo, u	æ, e, ü	üe, ü	ei	ei, ī	ou, ū	iu, öu
Nhg.	ā	ä	ē	ī	ō	ū	ö	ü	ai	ei	au	eu

III. Development of Modern English vowels from Anglo-Saxon.

In Anglo-Saxon the vowel-syetem was very similar to modern German, but the whole syetem has been radically changed in modern times. The long vowels are marked with an accent (´).

á.

"The rule is, that A.S. á came to be written as long o in Mid. E., and in E. such words are pronounced with a sound which we should now also call long o." Probably this was an intermediate sound at first, then gradually it displaced any influence of the a, - stán, stone; hál, (w)hol(e); áþ, oath; hám, home; sár, sore. Hwa, who and twa, two passed through the ō stage even in Mid. E. and since the words containing ō were shifting to oo, these words

Skeat, W. W. Principles of Etymology Vol. 1. p. 54.

did too and the modern pronunciation became "whōō" and "tōō". No change has been made in spelling to correspond to the changed pronunciation. Wráþ - wroth, cláþ - cloth, þáwan - thaw (for thow) preserve the Mid. E. intermediate pronunciation. The A.S. suffix -hād became Mid. E. - hood, - hod, but it has been shortened in E. owing to its unaccented position, - man-hood. "A most important word is án, Mid. E. oon (riming at first with dawn, later with bone), but now riming with bun. In the fifteenth century, a parasitic w sprang up before the initial vowel, which by that time may have become like o in bone; this would produce a form woon: then the w modified the long o into long u, after which the w was shortened and 'unrounded', giving the curious E. one, in which the initial w is only written by comic writers, who (correctly enough) write wun. ---- The word is doubly interesting, because the compounds on-ly, al-one, l-one (short for al-one), l-one-ly (short for al-one-ly), at-one, all preserve the sound into which it would have passed according to the rule."

É.

Skeat, W. W. Principles of English Etymology. Vol. 1. p. 56

In AS. this é was like ę in they but its quality has changed to the ē in me, - hé, he; mé, me; dé - the(e); gé, - ye; her, here(e); séc - an, seek; béc - e, beech; grén - e, green. It also represents the umlaut of o̱ caused by a following i, - fót, fét (Goth. * fotjus); tóð, téþ; gós, gés.

i.

The i sounded like ē in me but a sound crept in before it causing a diphthongal nature a - i and these finally merged in ī, - hwíl, while(e); blíð - e, blithe(e); rídan, ride(e); wif, wife(s) but in the compound wíf - men, later form wimmen, the i is shortened; the pronunciation of "wimmen" is retained although the spelling has been changed to "women" from analogy to "men". Rim, rime(e) (usually spelled rhyme) is a perfect example, although confusion with rhythm has led to this awkward spelling. The words of Latin origin, - vīnum - wine, scrīnium - shrine, scrībere - shrive, are proof of the change in pronunciation.

ó

As was mentioned above, ó was shifted to o̅o̅. This occurred 1550 - 1650; scó, shoe; to, to (too) and too; stól, stool; hóf, hoof; The original value is not lost in swór - swore and flór - floor. In óðer, Mid. E. oother, the sound of o̱ changed

to ŭ in E. other; so in bród or, brother and móte, (I) must (with phonetic spelling). The w has a slight vocalic value tending toward ōō in grów-an, grow; hlów-an, low (of a cow); flów-an, flow. Wóc, woke(e) keeps the ō. Other words ending in -oc are preserved in forms ending in -ook with the -oo sound in foot, -loc-ian, look; bóc, book; cóc, cook; scóc, shook; the same change occurs in stód, stood; gód, good; fót, foot. AS. ó before n stands for West Germanic á or Preg. ê, -spón (chip of wood), spoon. It is also the result of -compensative lengthening, -* gons gives góe, gooce (the n is preserved in Nhg. Gans); * tonþ gives tóþ, tooth (Danish tand); * onder gives ander which becomes óder (Goth. anthar, Nhg. ander).

ú.

"The history of the AS. ú (sounded as oo in boot) is parallel to that of the AS. í. Just as the latter was developed into Italian ai, E. long i, so the former was developed into Italian au, E. ow in bout. Moreover, the change took place much about the same time, viz. in A.D. 1550-1650. To this may be added, that just as a final long i is orna-

Skeat, W. W. Principles of English Etymology. Vol. I. p. 65.

mentally written as y, as in by, my, thy, etc., so likewise the final ow is often ornamentally written ow, as in cow, how, now, and in a few words the same spelling prevails even when the sound is not final, as in owl, shower, town; nú, now; cú, cow; úre, our; fúl, foul; mús, mouse; þúsend, thousand; dún, down. AS. ú also arises from loss of n in un followed by s or th, *uns > ús, us (n is preserved in Nhg. uns); *mund > múd, mouth (Nhg. Mund); *cunde > cúde, could (Nhg. könnte an further, n is seen in E. can); could is spelled analogous to would and should, there being no reason for the l; a shortened value of the u is kept; *sund > súd, south (Ohg. sund) means sunny quarter, and is derived from sun; this accounts for the presence of the n originally; hlúd has become loud with initial h lost.

y.

"The Romans adopted this letter from the Greeks in order to represent the sound of the Greek u (υ) in words borrowed from that language." The sound is thought to have been that of Nhg. ü in grün. The sound was lost at an early period and consequently

Skeat, W. W. Principles of English Etymology. Vol. I. p. 66.

ý in sound and symbol merged in Mid. E. with í, - brýd, bride; prýt-e, pride; fýr, fire; hwý, why. It is also the product of mutation. Similar mutation is seen in other languages; mús, mous(e) has the mutated plural mýs, mic(e); lýs, lice; cú, cow with the plural cý, ki-ne, the ne being a weak plural ending as in childr-en and brethr-en, each of which has added the ending to a form already plural. The i-sound is shortened in fýst, fist and wýsc-an, to wish.

ǽ, éá, éo.

The ǽ is a prolonged sound of a in man; it becomes E. ē, - sǽ, sea; bǽr, bier; hǽþ, heath; hlǽn-e, lean; tǽc-an, teach; sǽd, seed. AS. ǽ commonly arises from mutation of AS. á, - hǽlan, to heal, a derivative of hál. Each member of AS. éá was pronounced, that is, it was "broken"; géar, year; éast-or, Easter (connected with Austra, showing the Germanic au which ea commonly represents); héap, heap; stréam, stream; céápian, cheapen. Before l, r, or h plus a consonant a underwent "breaking" to ea, - healp, helpan; weard, weord-an (Nhg. werden) illustrates the "breaking" of e before r or h plus a consonant, to eo. Eo commonly represents Germanic ew; - þ réo,

three; séo, she; béo, bee; déor-e, dear; léof, lief; fréosan, freeze; hréod, reed; déop, deep. These all show E. ē-sound.

Long vowel correspondences.

Preg.	ê, ai	ô	î	ê, ô	û	û	ai	au	eu
AS.	á	é	í	ó	ú	ý	ǽ	éa	éo
E.	ō	ē	ai	ōō	ou	ai	ee	ee	ee

The short vowels are in the main like the long ones except in quantity. AS. ŭ had the sound of oo in book; sun-ne, sun has lost its rounded quality. Rounding of the u by scribes caused confusion between u and o in the manuscripts, - lúfian, love; sunu, son.

AS. had four principal parts for every verb just as Ohg. did. These are reduced to three in E., the preterite plural being lost. In many cases the vowels of both preterites have disappeared and have been replaced by the vowel of the participle, for example, AS. beran, bær, bǽron, geboren, - E. bear (ea due to breaking of e due to r), bore, borne; stelan, stæl, stǽlon, gestolen, - E. steal (similar breaking of e), stole, stolen; céosan, céas, curon, gecoren, - E. choose, chose, chosen. The tendency in modern times is toward fewer forms and

larger classes attract from the smaller. Many of the AS. strong verbs have become weak, - ceorfan, carve; - slēpan, sleep. Only by historical treatment can the original verb-classes be traced. In AS. these resembled the Gothic very closely. Vowel gradation, similar to the Ohg., occurred and has staid in E., - AS. drincan - dranc, E. drink - drank, in which the qualitative ablaut occurs; the quantitative is seen in AS. ge - druncen, E. drunk.

Umlaut, or mutation caused by a following i was mentioned above in connection with AS. ē. After causing the umlaut, the i frequently dropped, - AS. mann - menn, E. man - men; gold - adjective gyldan, E. gold - gilt; burh, town, plural byrig; AS. * dohtr - i (to or for the daughter, dehter; AS. * mūs - ig > mýs, mice; AS. * án - ig, any, énig; AS. * fōt - ig > fét, feet; AS. * weax - id, he grows, from weaxan, became wiexð; AS. * weorc - jan, to work, wiercan; AS. * héav - id, he heave, from héawan, hiewð; AS. * léoht - jan, to light, liehtan. There are "nearly eighty instances of mutation even in modern English", illustrating every kind in AS.; Francish - French, Angles - English; Skeat, W. W. Principles of English Etymology Vol I. p. 211.

fore-first; full-fill, lust-list (well illustrated in Chaucer); one-any; brother-brethr-en, book-beech; mouse-mice, cow-kine; AS. éald, E. old-elder; AS. céap, E. cheap-keep; AS. déop, E. deep-depth. Causative verbs are frequently formed by mutation; sat-set (to cause to sit), drank-drench (of a horse), fall-fell, cunnan-keyth (to make known, used in Chaucer). Gradation and mutation of a vowel may occur in the same word as feed mutated from AS. fóda; the ó in fóda is a variation of Preg. *fad. Comparisons may be made from the following table. The AS. vowels in the upper line are mutated to the ones below, respectively. Practically the same changes occur in E., as seen in the examples above.

Table of vowels affected by i-mutation.

AS.	a o u	á ó ú	ea, eo	éa éo
AS.	e y ÿ	é é ý	ie, y	íe ý

"Consistent carrying out of a sound-change does not necessarily imply that it is carried out everywhere, regardless of its position in the breath-group, its surroundings, and the influence of synthetic

Sweet, Henry. A History of English Sounds.

elements: quantity, stress and intonation. On the contrary, most sound-changes seem to begin under special circumstances, and if they do extend themselves over the whole range of the sound in question, it is only gradually." One change according to stress is than-then; another, of-off; each pair has come from one word. Words uttered even in different frames of mind have different qualities, it being uncertain which will tend to become fixed; if a person says no in an uncertain, hesitating manner, there is an upward slide at the end like o͞o, while one giving a very firm negative cuts of the o͞o sound. Usually if a word is spoken slowly a double vowel tends to develop, probably because it is difficult to hold the vocal organs in one position, while a firm pronunciation gives a single vowel. Vowel-changes may arise from tendencies in the organs themselves or from external conditions. This fact is recognized especially in the pronunciation of proper names. I heard a name recently and after having heard it pronounced several times by different people, I am uncertain whether it is Brentin, Brenten, Brenton, Brintin, Brinten, or Brinton. Popular

etymology has wrought changes and continues to act. The relation of sur in sur-loin to super is lost sight of; it is now connected with sir, spelled sirloin, and even a fictitious story as to its having been knighted is circulated to account for its source; the confusion of rime with Greek rhythmós has been mentioned; shamfast, bound by shame, (used by Chaucer) became spelled shamefaced from its supposed relation to the countenance; teche, faulty, became spelled touchy, on the supposition that it was a mispronunciation of touchy as "tetch" was for touch. Climatic conditions have their effect. The open vowels of a balmy country become closer in cold climates; - pāpa becomes pope in moving from Italy to England. Shifting of quantity often accompanies stress shifting in diphthongs, - Chaucer has both kneeves and knowes from AS. cnēow; choose and chese from cēosan, lese and lose from lēosan. The loss of vowels in unstressed syllables, as above, is common. English spelling is fixed but not standardized; AS. ā is denoted by ō plus e in stone but by oa in moan, although these two words have had the same vowel from the first. The tendency in E. is toward

simpler forms,- all case endings are lost except the possessive; even in Chaucer's time -e- endings were largely preserved and pronounced. Analogy is at work to put similar forms together and make fewer classes, regardless of history. The latest move is a systematic attack upon spelling.

Nhg. is more conservative in making changes and consequently more of historical usage is clearly preserved in it. The tendency toward umlaut continues today in it, while the Norman Conquest put an end to it in England. "The Germans have retained this plural function much more largely than we have, and also another of far greater scope and utility; for they have converted this modification into a means of differentiating the indicative from the subjunctive mood, thus - hatte, habēbat; hätte, habēret." The subjunctive mode is practically lost in E. The loss of E. case-endings was noted, German of today still has most of them. Language is constantly changing but the forces, that are at work, act so slowly and in so many fields that nobody can predict with certainty about its future development.

Earle, John. The Philology of the English Tongue. p. 131.

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